

Amendments to the Abstract:

Please amend the Abstract of the Disclosure section starting at page 36, line 2 and ending at page 36, line 20 to read, as follows.

~~An~~ The present invention relates to an image forming apparatus includes comprising a plurality of movable image carriers, a movable intermediate transfer body, and a contacting member means separably contacting to the ~~[[said]]~~ intermediate transfer body at a contacting position. A position for transfer between a first image carrier and the intermediate transfer body defines a first transfer position. A position for transfer between a second image carrier and the intermediate transfer body defines a second transfer position. ~~Said image carrier located most closely to said contacting position in a direction extending along said intermediate transfer body on a downstream side in a moving direction of said intermediate transfer body with respect to said contacting position. Said image carrier located most closely to said contacting position in a direction extending along said intermediate transfer body on an upstream side in a moving direction of said intermediate transfer body with respect to said contacting position. A toner image formed on said intermediate transfer body is again transferred onto a transfer material after passing through said first transfer position and said second transfer position. And formula $L_a - S_a \geq L_m$ is satisfied where a distance from said contacting position to said first transfer position along the moving direction of said intermediate transfer body is set as L_a , where a distance from said exposing position on said first image carrier to said first transfer position along the moving direction of said first image carrier is set as S_a , and where an image length formed on said intermediate transfer body is set as L_m .~~ The latent image

formation on the first image carrier is done at a time different from a contacting operation of the contacting member.